

## Chapter 2 Action Planning

### Module 4: Action Planning Using VMSOA

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VMSOA: Vision—Mission—Strategies—Objectives—Actions

#### Step Up and Step Out to create an action plan!

You have community input, eager partners, and some structure for your coalition. Now *let the fun begin!* It is time to get out the paper and make some plans! This is *fun* and *important!* The success and sustainability of your initiative will depend largely on the time and efforts devoted to planning the actions you wish to take.

This shouldn't be an overwhelming task. Like everything discussed to this point, your plan will be unique for your community's needs. If you have never done this before, there are no rigid requirements so don't be afraid to just jump in there and begin to learn!



#### Dare to Dream...and then make it feasible!

##### Why is a written plan important?

- ♥ It is the best tool possible to communicate the coalition's purpose and intent
- ♥ An organized plan saves time and effort in the long run
- ♥ A good plan ensures successful results

##### Information you'll need to have available for planning

1. Information collected from the listening sessions
2. The community review
3. The list of community resources

## The VMSOA Plan

There are different styles and programs that can be used to develop action plans. The VMSOA Plan (1), used for many Kansas Health Foundation projects and initiatives, is presented here. It is a simple five-step action-planning tool that has been used successfully by a number of communities. The VMSOA steps are used to determine:

- ♥ Vision: *A short memorable statement describing your dream.*
- ♥ Mission: *A statement of what you intend to accomplish and why.*
- ♥ Strategies: *Broad statements about how your mission will be accomplished.*
- ♥ Objectives: *Statements of how much you will accomplish, for whom, and when.*
- ♥ Action Plan: *A detailed plan of the actions needed to achieve the objectives, answering exactly what will be done, who will do it, and when it will be done.*

Before you begin the VMSOA process, keep in mind you will be developing a vision and mission with which everyone can identify. There is no direction and very little feeling of accomplishment when a vision and mission are not shared. It is easy when taken one step at a time!



## Suggestions for creating action plans

- ♥ Concentrate on developing plans that create change rather than provide new services. New services usually require people and long-term funding. What are the things that already exist that can be changed without funding?
- ♥ Develop plans that reflect the members' interest and expertise. These provide the best opportunities for change.
- ♥ Develop plans with realistic changes. Very complex issues usually require more complex changes if tackled all at once. Complex issues can often be broken down into smaller changes to make a plan more feasible.

### Examples:

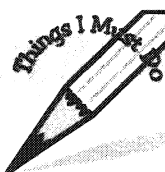


**Example 1:** Rather than build a whole new city recreation department gym, work with the local YMCA to see if an arrangement can be made to provide more options.

**Example 2:** Rather than build a lighted walking track out of the most up-to-date, soft-surface material, start by finding a local boy/girl scout troop that will volunteer to "blaze" a dirt trail on a school ground or other public area (as space and permission exists). As funding can be found, add asphalt, then lighting, then "fitness tip signs," then landscaping (if needed), and so forth.

- ♥ Have the whole coalition adopt all plans for action. Actions can be developed at a committee level, but have more support when adopted by the whole coalition.
- ♥ Be prepared to change the plan to take advantage of new opportunities as they come along.
- ♥ Remember that change doesn't happen overnight. It can be slow, so plan opportunities for coalition members to celebrate even small steps to change!

## Take the steps...using VMSOA



A VMSOA worksheet is found at the end of this module to help you take these steps!

### Plan actions with VMSOA

1. Begin by writing a vision
2. Write a broad-based mission statement
3. Get more specific by writing strategies
4. Become detailed by writing objectives
5. Complete the plan by specifying actions

### Step 1. Create a Vision

Begin with a very broad-based description of the way you want your community to look. A vision:

- ♥ Is short and memorable
- ♥ Describes your dream
- ♥ Specifies the way it "ought to be"

A vision statement is a picture of the end result...your “ideal.” When written descriptively, it will “energize” people and become a recruiting tool for coalition members! **One** vision will be written for your coalition, however four examples are given below:

**Examples: (Examples are also found on the form at the end of this module)**



**Vision example 1:** Happy, active children with reduced risk of heart disease, cancer and other diet/activity related health problems.

**Vision example 2:** Happy children making healthy eating and activity choices where they live, learn, and play.

**Vision example 3:** A community where people partner to sustain options for healthy eating and activity choices everywhere they live, learn, and play.

**Vision example 4:** A happy, healthy community where adults and children balance physical activity and eating choices, and businesses prosper without significant health related expenses.

## Step 2. Write a Mission Statement

Describe how your vision will be accomplished.

- ♥ What you intend to do?
- ♥ Why do you intend to do it?

A good mission statement will be inspiring, exciting, clear, and encourage people to join in your cause. It is a statement that explains what you are going to be doing. A mission statement needs to clarify the common goal, but be broad enough to attract all potential contributors.

It is suggested the mission statement be written to include everyone in the community. If care is not taken, statements can be very limiting, e.g., if the mission were to create healthy eating and activity choices by introducing life skills in PE class and school lunch theme days for K-3 grade, it would limit action and participation to K-3 graders and only in PE or during school meals.



### The mission of Step Up and Step Out

“To create an environment whereby people and resources come together to make a difference in the health of our children, by increasing opportunities for healthy eating and activity choices.”

One mission statement will be written for your coalition, however 5 different examples are provided below.

**Examples of other mission statements: (Examples are also found on the form at the end of this module)**



**Mission example 1:** To educate, coordinate, and create opportunities for healthy eating and activity choices everywhere children live, learn, and play in the community.

**Mission example 2:** To inspire, create, and maintain an environment of healthy eating and activity choices to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and some cancers for children in our community.

**Mission example 3:** To form, support, and inspire community partnerships to increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity choices to decrease health risks for children.

**Mission example 4:** To motivate, educate, and connect people in the community to create an environment for healthy eating and activity choices that decreases the risk of health problems for children.

**Mission example 5:** To promote, support, and initiate healthy eating and physical activity choices for children in the home, school, and community to decrease health risks.

### Step 3. Write Strategies for Your Mission

Become more specific in your planning by writing the **strategies** you want to use. These are approaches for making changes like education or revising programs.

- ♥ How will the mission be achieved?
- ♥ What broad approaches will be used?

Strategies are broad statements that describe how the mission will be obtained.

**Multiple** strategies will be written and used to address each of the components:  
Community—Nutrition Education—Physical Activity—School Meals.

**Examples of strategies:** (Examples are also found on the form at the end of this module)



**Strategy 1:** Use newsletters to create awareness or teach lifestyle skills for making healthy choices in the community.

**Strategy 2:** Have community members model healthy choices to educate, lead by example, and send a repetitive message.

**Strategy 3:** Change policies or programs that affect healthy choices.

#### **Step 4. Write Objectives**

Provide more detail when you write **objectives**

- ♥ How much do you intend to do and for whom?
- ♥ When will it be accomplished?

**Multiple** objectives will be written for each component to accomplish your mission.

**Examples of community objectives:** (Examples are also found on the form at the end of this module)



**Objective 1:** By 2005, the annual Fall Festival will offer more than 2 healthy eating options in concession stands.

**Objective 2:** By 2006, the annual Fall Festival will have a minimum of two events that involve children in physical activity.

**Examples of nutrition education and physical activity objectives:**



**Objective 1:** By 2005, all K-6 students will participate in a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity school program.

**Objective 2:** By 2006, all 7-12 students will participate in a comprehensive Nutrition and physical activity school program.

**Objective 3:** By 2004, articles on healthy eating or physical activity choices will be a part of every school newsletter.

**Examples of school meal objectives:**



**Objective 1:** By 2005, Grades 3-8 will have an active Youth Advisory Council.

**Objective 2:** By 2006, the high school will have an active Youth Advisory Council.

**Step 5. Write the Action Plan**

It is complete when you write **actions**—for each objective, the specific steps you need to take to make sure the vision, mission, strategies, and objectives are fulfilled!

- ♥ Who will do it?
- ♥ What will they do?
- ♥ How much will they do?
- ♥ When will they do it?

For each objective written, what are the specific action steps that will be needed to accomplish what you have planned?

**Example: (Examples are also found on the form at the end of this module)**



**Strategy 1: Change existing nutrition and physical activity programs:**

The school will initiate a plan to identify curriculum, obtain resources, and train teachers for implementing a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity school program.

**The objective:** By 2005, all K-6 students will participate in a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity school program.

**The action steps:**

- ♥ By Feb. 2004, the school will form a curricula committee
- ♥ By April 2004, the curricula review committee will make recommendations for selection of a program
- ♥ By May 2004, the principal and curriculum director will review the recommendations and present to the school board
- ♥ By June 2004, the school board will make a decision on curriculum
- ♥ By August 2004, the principal will have a plan for training teachers
- ♥ By November 2004, teachers will receive training
- ♥ By January 2005, teachers will use curriculum
- ♥ By May 2005, the curricula committee will follow-up with teachers and determine if changes are needed

- ♥ By May of each succeeding school year, the curricula committee will conduct a review to determine if changes are needed

**Strategy 2: Education:** The coalition will find resources and create community awareness to support implementation of a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity school program.

**The objective:** By 2005, all K-6 students will participate in a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity school program.

**The action steps:**

- ♥ By Jan. 2004, the coalition will form a committee to support changes
- ♥ By Jan. 2004, the coalition will contact schools with existing comprehensive nutrition and physical activity programs to obtain resource examples
- ♥ By March 2004, the coalition committee will write newspaper articles to market and gain public support for the program
- ♥ By March 2004, the coalition committee will meet with the school curricula committee to determine if additional resources are needed
- ♥ By May 2004, the coalition committee will meet with the school principal to determine what resources/awareness are needed
- ♥ By August 2004, the coalition committee will determine with the principal, volunteers needed to assist with teacher training sessions
- ♥ By September 2004, the coalition committee will write newspaper articles to recognize the implementation of the program
- ♥ By January 2005, the coalition committee will write newspaper articles to recognize teacher efforts
- ♥ By May 2005, the coalition will personally recognize and thank teachers for their efforts

## Action planning worksheet

A suggested action planning form that outlines the VMSOA steps, and an example of its' use is found at the end of this module.

## What time is needed to develop an action plan?



The time frame required to develop a plan will vary from community to community depending on the number of objectives written. An action plan could be developed in two weeks or it could take six months.

A simple, flexible plan is suggested to begin with. It will be easier to understand, use, and modify than a grand, complex scheme. A simple plan will also be easier to



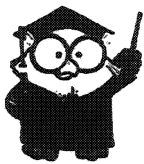
explain to new coalition members and if necessary, adapt to the changes in your community.

**Examples:**



**Community A** creates a very simple plan in the first year. They choose just three areas for development in each of the components—community, nutrition education, physical activity, and school meals. The activities they choose require a minimum number of resources. One of the actions they choose for physical activity involves working with the city recreation department to increase the number of times classes in an existing swim program are offered. In comparison:

**Community B** creates a more complex plan. They choose ten different areas for development from the physical activity component alone. One of the areas they wish to develop is the creation of a volleyball program that has not previously existed. Their actions will need to include support for the program, training, coaches, and facilities.



## References and Resources

- (1) The Kansas Health Foundation, Wichita, Kansas. *Planning Strategically: An Orientation to VMSOA*, 2000.



### **Module Tip:**

While it is possible to come up with an idea and just “go for it” without taking the time to create an organized plan, the lack of organization will eventually lead to duplication of efforts, depletion of resources, and involve more time and effort down the road.

### FAQs:

- **Question:** Do vision or mission statements ever need to be changed?  
**Answer:** Yes, as community needs and interests change, the vision and mission statements should be modified to reflect the new thoughts.
- **Question:** How do you incorporate information from the listening session in the action plan?  
**Answer:** Use information from flip charts and/or take minutes at the listening sessions. Identify the needs and interests expressed at those sessions and address them in your planning.

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### Module Glossary:

**Action Plan:** A detailed plan of the actions needed to achieve objectives, answering exactly what will be done, who will do it, and when it will be done.

**Mission:** A statement of what you intend to accomplish and why.

**Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC):** Student groups formed to offer feedback regarding school meals, and to take an active role in promoting the school meal program goals. A program supported by the American School Food Service Association.

**Objectives:** Statements of how much you will accomplish, for whom, and when.

**Strategy:** Broad statements about how your mission will be accomplished.

**Vision:** A short memorable statement describing your dream.

**VMSOA:** Vision-Mission-Strategies-Objectives-Actions. A 5-step method for action planning.

**Youth Advisory Council (YAC):** A council of students, teachers, and others that makes recommendations for any youth-related factor, including school meals, activity, or substance abuse.



## Worksheet

The information collected from the Listening Sessions helps to form the decisions you will use to create the VMSOA action-planning outline. An example of how the worksheet may be used follows along with a blank worksheet for your use.

### Notes:

1. See Chapter 2, Module 5 for an explanation of the environmental change methods listed on the Action Planning Page.
2. You will find the information in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 full of ideas for nutrition education, physical activity and school meal actions and activities.



## VMOSA: Vision – Mission – Strategies – Objectives – Actions



Vision (a description of the way you want things to look): <b>A healthy community where adults and children balance physical activity and healthy eating choices.</b>				
Mission (a statement of what the group intends to do and why): <b>To form, support, and inspire community partnerships to increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity choices for decreasing health risks for children.</b>				
Strategies for the components (i.e., education, policy, programs): <b>Education, modeling, program changes, and policy changes</b>				
Specify objectives below for each component (statements of 1. how much the group will do within a specified time period and 2. how it will be accomplished ):				
Community	Nutrition Education	Physical Activity	School Meals	
Objective 1: By 2005, the annual Fall Festival will offer more than 2 healthy eating options in concessions stands.	Objective 1: By 2005, all K-6 students will participate in a comprehensive nutrition education program.	Objective 1: By 2005, all K-6 students will participate in a comprehensive physical education program.	Objective 1: By 2005, Grades 3-8 will have an active Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC).	
Objective 2: By 2004, there will be monthly newspaper articles relating to healthy eating and activity choices.	Objective 2: By 2006, all 7-8 students will participate in a comprehensive nutrition education program.	Objective 2: By 2007, physical activity will be incorporated into the classroom for all K-6 students.	Objective 2: By 2005, there will be monthly school meal theme days for K-8 students.	
Objective 3: By 2006, the community will sponsor a healthy recipe contest.	Objective 3: By 2006, there will be a plan for identifying in-service needs for teacher skill development.	Objective 3: By 2007, there will be a plan for identifying resource need for the physical education program.	Objective 3: By 2007, teachers will receive monthly information about school meals i.e., nutrient analysis or new products.	



## Environmental Change Plan

Use 1 page for each objective



Objective 1—School Meals By 2005, Grades 3-8 will have an active Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC).

Environmental change methods planned. Check all that apply.	Actions and resources needed to implement the plan	Problems to resolve	Who takes action, and by what date?	Review: Results of actions Check all that apply.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repetition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support <input type="checkbox"/> Reward	<b>Action:</b> <i>Gain support from principal and food-service staff to initiate a NAC group</i>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Discussed in Chapter 3</i> <b>Resources:</b> <i>USDA guidelines for creating Nutrition Advisory Councils (NAC's)</i>	<i>Questions about cost and resources</i>	<i>School meal committee (including school food service director) by August 2004.</i>	<b>Communication:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Great marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Need M-and-M's <b>Time:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good timing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Location:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Resources:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible cost <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Participation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Overall:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Great-continue <input type="checkbox"/> Good-revise <input type="checkbox"/> Fair-revise
<b>-Or-</b>  <b>Problems resolved:</b>	<b>Action:</b> <i>Find a teacher sponsor for the NAC group</i>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Discussed in Chapter 3</i> <b>Resources:</b>	<i>Adjust teacher's schedule for time required</i>	<i>Elementary school principal by September 2004.</i>	
<b>Communication</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of equipment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other	<b>Action:</b> <i>Develop guidelines for NAC group</i>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Discussed in Chapter 3</i> <b>Resources:</b> <i>USDA guidelines for creating Nutrition Advisory Councils (NAC's)</i>	<i>Fair selection of participants</i>	<i>School principal, food service director and teacher sponsor by October 2004.</i>	
	<b>Action:</b> <i>Develop a schedule and invite students to attend the NAC group</i> <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Discussed in Chapter 3</i> <b>Resources:</b> <i>School calendar of events</i>	<i>Rescheduling issues in case of conflicts</i>	<i>Teacher sponsor and food service director by December 2004.</i>	

**Comments:** A review of actions taken will be conducted monthly.

## VMOSA: Vision – Mission – Strategies – Objectives – Actions

Vision (a description of the way you want things to look):				
Mission (a statement of what the group intends to do and why):				
Strategies for the components (i.e., education, policy, programs):				
Specify objectives below for each component (statements of 1. how much the group will do within a specified time period and 2. how it will be accomplished ):				
Community	Nutrition Education	Physical Activity	School Meals	
Objective 1:	Objective 1:	Objective 1:	Objective 1:	
Objective 2:	Objective 2:	Objective 2:	Objective 2:	
Objective 3:	Objective 3:	Objective 3:	Objective 3:	



## Environmental Change Plan

Objective \_\_\_\_\_

Environmental change methods planned. Check all that apply.	Actions and resources needed to implement the plan	Problems to resolve	Who takes action, and by what date?	Review— results of actions Check all that apply.
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Support <input type="checkbox"/> Reward  -Or- <b>Problems resolved:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Time <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<b>Action:</b>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b>  <b>Resources:</b>   <b>Action:</b>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b>  <b>Resources:</b>			<b>Communication:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Great marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Need M-and-M's <b>Time:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good timing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Location:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Resources:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible cost <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Participation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Overall:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Great-continue <input type="checkbox"/> Good-revise <input type="checkbox"/> Fair-revise

Comments: